

Once again, I applaud the efforts of Director Golden and ask all my colleagues to join me in recognizing his steadfast commitment to serving our community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS GROWTH ACT

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2001

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to help our charitable organizations and promote fairness in our tax code by encouraging charitable giving. This is one of three bills I am introducing today to correct certain peculiarities in the tax code that discourage charitable giving.

Many taxpayers today contribute to charitable organizations out of the goodness of their hearts and in the expectation that they will not be subject to federal income tax on their gifts. However, in some cases taxpayers suffer a reduction in the amount of their charitable deductions. For example, under current law itemizing taxpayers with incomes above a certain threshold (\$128,950 this year for a married couple filing jointly) suffer a phase-down in the total amount of charitable contributions they can take. The phase-down is at the rate of 3 percent of their itemized deductions for every \$1,000 over the threshold, up to a total in lost deductions of 80 percent. Thus, a taxpayer making a \$10,000 contribution and subject to this phase-down could lose up to \$8,000 in charitable deduction. This is part of the itemized deduction "haircut" administered as part of the 1986 Tax Reform Act.

Obviously, most individuals give to charity because the act of charity is a blessing for both the giver and the receiver. It is hard to imagine the individual who gives for the purpose of getting a tax deduction. Nevertheless, taxes can affect the amount an individual is willing to give. When the tax burden overall increases, individuals have less discretionary income and thus less income to give to charity. And when the effective price of charitable giving rises, which is exactly the consequence of the phase-down in itemized deductions, there is a disincentive to give.

The legislation I am introducing today is very simple. It excludes from the itemized deduction "haircut" all qualified charitable contributions. Qualified medical expenses, certain investment interest expense, and deductions for casualty losses already receive this treatment. Certainly charitable contributions should be treated no worse.

This legislation is good social policy because it provides additional, private resources to charitable organizations. It also helps to develop the strength of our social fabric by encouraging more individuals to become involved in their communities through charitable organizations. In many instances, individuals first become involved through financial contributions before applying their personal time, energy, and creativity.

This legislation is also good economic policy because charitable organizations help to build

up those on the paths to success while acting as an effective safety net to those in trouble or need. As welfare reform has taught us abundantly, given the right incentives and the proper assistance, almost every individual can evolve from being a ward of society to being a productive member.

And this legislation is sound tax policy. Whether we have an income tax or a consumption tax, one principle remains clear and unchanging. No one should be taxed on property given to someone else.

This legislation is an important step toward increasing the resources of our charitable organizations. I hope my colleagues will join me as co-sponsors. I hope President Bush will endorse this legislation as part of his faith-based program. And I hope it can find its way to his desk this year for his signature.

Charity benefits both the giver and the receiver in like proportions. The act of giving elevates the heart of the giver. The act of receiving elevates the condition of the recipient. Charity is thus a blessed act that should suffer no discouragement from something so mean as the tax code.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. ADAM SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2001

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Black History Month, I would like to recognize several African American leaders from my district in California: Loretta Glickman Hillson, Ruby McKnight Williams and Ralph Riddle.

Loretta Glickman Hillson began her political career in the 1960s as President of the Human Relations Committee at Pasadena City College. As President of this organization, she led the fight to ensure equal access for all in the Rose Queen tryouts sponsored by the Tournament of Roses Association. Subsequently in 1978, Hillson became the first African American woman to become a member of the Tournament of Roses Association.

In 1977, Hillson became the first African American woman to be elected to the Pasadena City Council. After serving three years on the City Council, Hillson then became Pasadena's first African American vice-mayor. In 1982, Hillson won a momentous victory in the Pasadena mayoral election, once again breaking the color barrier by becoming the first African American woman to become Mayor of Pasadena. Hillson's selection as Mayor also marked the first time in the history of the United States, that a black woman became Mayor of a city with a population over 100,000. During her political career in Pasadena, Hillson was successful in making local government more accessible to residents in black neighborhoods, resulting in increased political activism and heightened interest in civil affairs among the black community.

Prior to beginning her political career, Hillson sang professionally with the New Christy Minstrels. She also spent several years as a choir director, English teacher and investment counselor. She is currently living in Lubbock, Texas with her husband Reverend

William B. Hillson, whom she married in 1991. Hillson's career paved the road for a more equal and representative government in Pasadena. Her strength and character will continue to be admired by generations to come.

Although Loretta Hillson certainly faced opposition and adversity during her tenure in city politics, many civil rights leaders of the past are responsible for the opportunities which African Americans like Hillson have enjoyed.

Rudy McKnight Williams is one of those leaders whose undaunting courage helped shape the society we live in today. Williams was born in 1894 in Topeka, Kansas, and as a young adult moved to California just as the Depression swept the nation. As a single woman in 1930, Williams had moved to California with the hope of becoming a kindergarten teacher as she had been in Topeka. Yet, the Pasadena school district denied employment to Williams because of her race. Although she faced an extremely segregated community with discriminatory laws, Williams refused to let her dreams be destroyed by racism and prejudice. Leaving her teaching career behind, Williams became a founding member of the Pasadena branch of the NAACP. She became a leader of the Civil Rights Movement in Southern California, petitioning for municipal and school employment, home ownership and access to public swimming pools for African Americans.

In addition to her work with the NAACP, Williams also volunteered with the League of Women Voters, and served as Commission Chairman of the Pasadena Recreation Commission. She was also President of the Tuesday Morning Club, The Women's Democratic Club, and the Interracial Women's Club. Yet, her greatest service was to the NAACP where she served for over 65 years, including two terms as President in 1959 and from 1969–1982. In addition, Williams served for six years as an advisor to the NAACP National Youth Work Committee. During Williams' leadership in the NAACP, the Pasadena branch backed two precedent-setting school integration cases in which Williams visited the U.S. Supreme Court to witness the decisions. Mrs. Williams was also involved in other organizations, including Co-Op Village, Citizens Urban Renewal Advisory Committee, Pasadena Head Start, and the Pasadena Commission on Human Needs and Opportunities. Williams remained active with the NAACP as President Emeritus of the NAACP Executive Board until her death in 1999.

Williams contributed much to the spirit of Pasadena. Her community activism and work with our youth will be sorely missed. Yet, Williams' legacy lives on as Pasadena pays her tribute in an annual awards banquet in her name honoring those who exhibit excellence in community service.

In addition to Loretta Glickman Hillson and Ruby McKnight Williams, I would like to honor Ralph Riddle, another Pasadena community leader who assisted in changing the Pasadena Police Department. Ralph Riddle was born on June 9, 1916 in Pasadena, California. He attended Pasadena High School and then completed his university education in Arizona. In 1942, Ralph joined the military and spent four years as an Army Sergeant stationed throughout the world. After returning to Pasadena,